

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office action of June 2, 2006. An application for a two month extension of time in which to respond is being filed concurrently herewith.

With regard to the claims, claims 1, 3-6, 8-10, 20-22, 24, 26-31, 33, 35-40, 42, 44, 46, 49, 51-54 were cancelled, and claims 2, 7, 11, 13, 23, 25, 32, 34, 41, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50 were amended.

In the office action, certain claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and certain other claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). The various references cited included Fuller (U.S. Patent No. 4,967,867), Dunlop (U.S. Patent No. 663,962), and Jackmauh (U.S. Patent No. 5,546,665).

However, the Examiner stated at page 3 that claims 14-19 are allowed, and that claims 2, 7, 11-13, 23, 25, 32, 34, 41, 43, 45, 47, 48 and 50 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations in the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for these allowances.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended the claims as identified above so that they are rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Claim 12 was not amended since it depends directly from claim 11 which was rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. It is believed therefore that this is within the Examiner's intent.

The remaining claims have been cancelled without prejudice to Applicant's right to prosecute those claims in a continuation application.

In view of these claim amendments and cancellations, withdrawal of the objections to claims 2, 7, 11-13, 23, 25, 32, 34, 41, 43, 45, 47, 48 and 50 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For all the reasons advanced above, Applicant submits that the application is in a condition for allowance and that action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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